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U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
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Household Purchases of Butter, Fluid Whole Milk, and Fluid Skim Milk, March 1957



HPD-41

May 1957

Agricultural Marketing Service

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

WASHINGTON, D. C.

PREFACE

This series of monthly reports is based on information obtained in a cooperative project financed by the United States Department of Agriculture and by the dairy industry through the American Dairy Association. The Department funds are provided under the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946.

Reports in this series covering the months April 1954 through March 1956 showed estimates of household purchases and related information for butter, cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine. Starting in April 1956 the coverage was changed to include data on fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk products in addition to butter. The reporting on cheese, nonfat dry milk solids, and margarine was discontinued at that time.

The basic data presented herein were collected by the Market Research Corporation of America from its National Consumer Panel and were tabulated by it, under contract with the Department. The data beginning April 1954 are based on reports from a sample of approximately 5,800 families. Additional data on butter only for the months April 1953-March 1954 are also available. The data prior to April 1954 were based on a sample of about 4,300 families and were statistically adjusted to the level reported from the 5,800-family sample.

The estimates include only purchases for consumption by household consumers and do not reflect volume purchased by hotels, restaurants, hospitals, or other institutions.

This report was prepared in the Market Development Branch of the Marketing Research Division, Agricultural Marketing Service.

HOUSEHOLD PURCHASES OF BUTTER, FLUID WHOLE MILK,
AND FLUID SKIM MILK, MARCH 1957

The data in this report are estimates of total purchases by household consumers only, and do not include consumption in restaurants, hotels, hospitals, or other institutional outlets. Data for a month are for a 4-week period (28 days) to permit comparisons of purchase volume between periods of equal length.

BUTTER

Household butter purchases totaled over 66 million pounds in March 1957, down about 3 percent from the 68 million pounds purchased in March 1956. Families in this survey paid an average price of 70.4 cents per pound for butter during March 1957, up 3 cents, or 4 percent, from a year earlier.

About 45 percent of all families purchased butter during March 1957 compared with 47 percent a year earlier. March 1957 was the sixth consecutive month in which the percentage of all families buying butter was equal to or less than in the same month in late 1955 and early 1956. Families buying butter this March bought as frequently--about 3 times a month--and made the same average size purchase--over 1 pound--as they did in March last year (table 1).

Some purchase and price comparisons for the 4 years for which data on butter are available are: April 1956-March 1957 over preceding year, household purchases were up 2 percent, average price 3 percent; for comparable periods a year earlier purchases were up 5 percent, prices unchanged; and for two years earlier purchases were up 13 percent, prices down 11 percent.

The household market for butter as measured by the percentage of all families buying was unchanged in the 12-month period ending March 31, 1957 from the preceding dairy marketing year. Those families buying butter in April 1956-March 1957 bought slightly more per purchase but less frequently than in the prior year.

Per capita purchases of butter by householders--about 0.42 pounds in each 28-day period--were almost 1 percent greater in April 1956-March 1957 than a year earlier. The general downturn from the level of 1955-56 in per capita purchases in the last 6 months of the year ending March 1957 moderated the gain for the entire year.

Butter purchased for household use declined from February to March 1957. In the prior 3 years, the February to March movement in purchases had been upward. As was the case from 1954 to 1956, butter prices to consumers declined from January to March.

FLUID MILK 1/

Total: Householders purchased 1,251 million quarts of fluid milk in March 1957, over 6 percent more than the 1,178 million quarts purchased in March 1955. About 85 percent of all families bought fluid milk in March 1957, the highest percentage reported in this series of monthly releases covering the 2 dairy marketing years 1954-55 and 1956-57. 2/ Per capita purchases were 7.61 quarts in March 1957, about 4 percent more than the 7.34 quarts in March 1955. 3/ The per capita purchase rate in March 1957 was the highest for this series to date.

Total household purchases of fluid milk for the dairy marketing year 1956-57 were over 5 percent more than in 1954-55; purchases per capita showed a 3 percent gain. The percentage of all families buying fluid milk increased almost 2 percent during April 1956-March 1957 from April 1954-March 1955 (table 5).

Fluid Whole Milk: March 1957 was a period of high level household purchase activity for fluid whole milk. 4/ Householders bought more whole milk per person and a larger total volume than during any other 28-day period in this series of reports covering the 1954-55 and 1956-57 dairy marketing years.

Householders purchased 1,180 million quarts of whole milk in March 1957, up almost 6 percent from the 1,116 million quarts bought in March 1955 (table 2). Per capita purchases were up about 3 percent in March 1957 over the earlier period. Consumers paid an average price of 23.2 cents per quart in March 1957, up 5 percent from the 22.1 cents paid 2 years earlier.

Householders in March 1957 purchased over 43 percent of their whole milk in larger-than-quart size containers as compared with less than 30 percent in March 1955. The trend toward increased use of the multiple size containers by household purchasers of whole milk has been evidenced by the comparison of current period with the comparable one of two years earlier in each monthly report in this series starting with April 1956 (fig. 3). Household purchases in the various size containers during March 1957 indicated a 63 percent increase in the amount purchased in half-gallons, a 17 percent gain in gallons, and a 14 percent decrease in single quarts from March 1955.

Consumers paid more for whole milk during March 1957 than in March 1955 regardless of container size. The price paid per quart for whole milk purchased

1/ Fluid cream and half-and-half mixtures are not included in these data.

2/ Slightly over 10 percent of all families reporting in this survey live on farms and many of these families have farm produced milk available for their own use.

3/ Per capita purchases are based on total U. S. civilian, non-institutional population.

4/ Fluid whole milk includes extra grades, regular grades, homogenized and not homogenized, and fortified and unfortified whole milk products.

in gallons was 18.6 cents in March 1957, up 5 percent from 2 years earlier; in half-gallons 22.0 cents, up over 8 percent; and in single-quart containers 24.5 cents, up 6 percent from the earlier period (table 3).

For the year April 1956-March 1957, household purchases of fluid whole milk were up 5 percent and the average price paid was about 3 percent higher than in the corresponding period 2 years earlier. Between the same periods, the percentage of all families buying and purchases per person were up about 2 percent. Householders in the April 1956-March 1957 dairy marketing year increased their purchase volume of fluid whole milk in gallon containers about 23 percent and in the half-gallons over 65 percent, but bought 14 percent less in single-quart containers than in April 1954-March 1955.

Fluid Skim Milk: Skim milk purchases for household use in March 1957 were estimated at 70.5 million quarts, up about 14 percent from the 61.6 million quarts equivalents bought in March 1955. ^{5/} Per capita purchases rose from 0.38 quart to 0.43 quart. Consumers paid an average price of 19.4 cents per quart in March 1957, up 5 percent from the 18.5 cents paid in March 1955.

Householders bought over 78 percent of their total skim milk products in the single-quart container in March 1957 compared with 85 percent in March 1955. Consumers paid 20.1 cents per quart for skim milk in quart containers, 17.7 cents in half-gallons, and 11.4 cents in gallons in March 1957. Quart and half-gallon prices for skim items were higher than 2 years earlier while gallon prices were lower (table 4).

Householders bought 17 percent more skim milk products in the period April 1956-March 1957 than in the same period 2 years earlier. During April 1956-March 1957, the percentage of all families buying skim milk products increased about 5 percent and per capita purchases almost 15 percent from the April 1954-March 1955 period. The average price paid per quart showed little change, increasing about 1 percent in the April 1956-March 1957 period from 2 years earlier.

In contrast to the decrease in household purchases of whole milk in the single-quart size container in April 1956-March 1957 from 2 years earlier, skim milk purchases in this size container increased over 3 percent. Householders in the dairy marketing year, April 1956-March 1957 increased their volume of skim milk purchases in half-gallon containers by 156 percent from the comparable period of 2 years earlier but reduced their purchase volume in gallon containers about 4 percent.

Beginning with the April 1957 issue, this report will include data on household purchases of fluid whole milk, fluid skim milk, and nonfat dry milk only. The reporting on butter will be discontinued. However, January-March 1957 quarterly report will include data on household purchases of butter.

^{5/} Fluid skim milk includes skim, fortified skim, buttermilk, and flavored milk drinks.

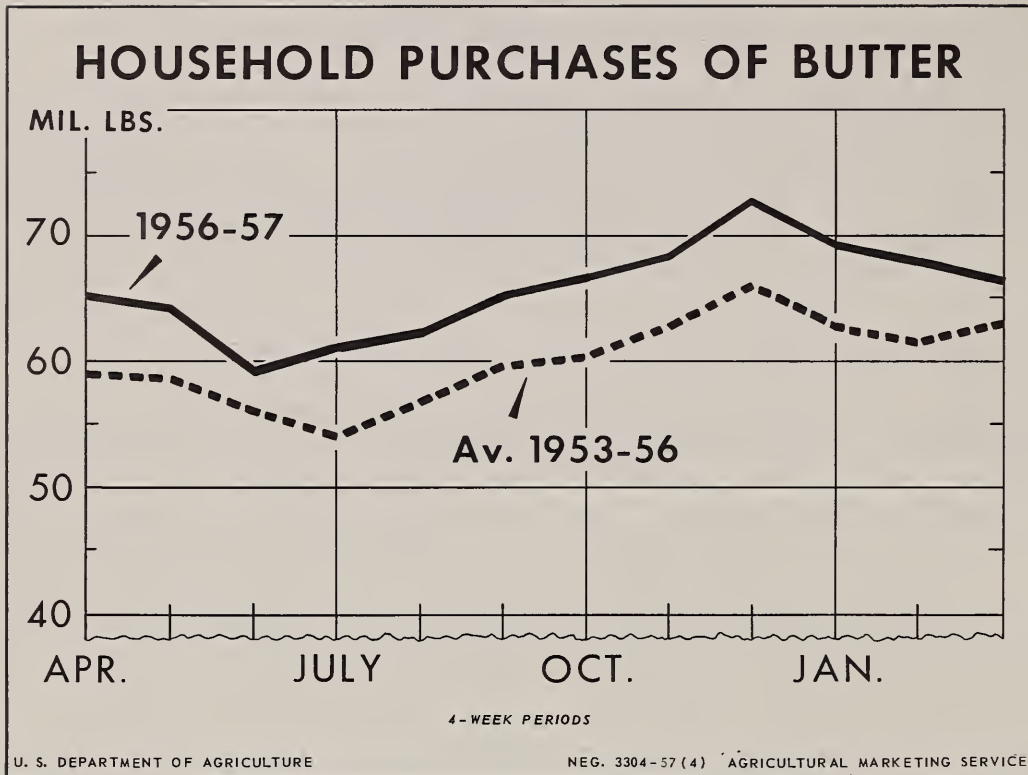


Figure 1

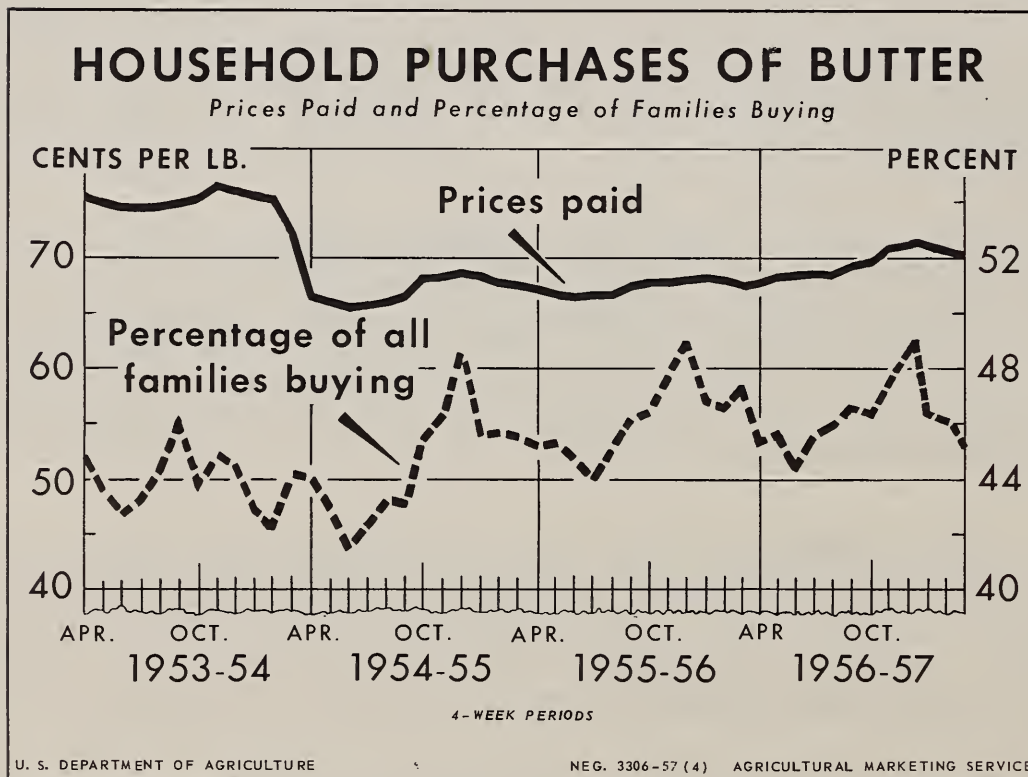


Figure 2

Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased							
	Total				Per 1,000 population in households			
	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Million pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds
April.....	65.1	62.7	58.0	56.2	401	388	367	369
May.....	64.2	62.2	58.5	54.7	396	385	371	359
June.....	59.3	61.3	54.5	51.9	366	380	345	340
July.....	61.0	57.0	54.2	50.9	377	356	341	332
August.....	62.2	58.7	57.9	53.3	385	366	364	348
September.....	65.2	63.1	60.4	55.1	404	394	379	360
October.....	65.8	66.0	63.2	51.0	403	409	394	331
November.....	68.1	68.0	65.7	54.4	418	422	410	353
December.....	73.0	72.4	69.2	55.5	448	449	432	361
January.....	69.2	66.2	65.3	56.6	421	411	407	367
February.....	67.9	67.2	63.8	53.4	413	417	398	346
March.....	66.5	68.3	64.0	56.3	405	423	399	365
Period	Percentage of all families buying				Average price paid per pound			
	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April.....	45.3	45.1	44.0	44.7	67.7	67.2	66.6	75.4
May.....	45.6	45.2	42.8	43.5	68.4	66.7	66.0	75.0
June.....	44.4	44.6	41.4	42.7	68.4	66.5	65.7	74.5
July.....	45.5	44.0	42.2	43.3	68.5	66.7	65.8	74.5
August.....	46.0	45.1	43.3	44.2	68.5	66.7	66.0	74.7
September.....	46.6	46.1	43.1	45.9	69.2	67.4	66.4	74.9
October.....	46.3	46.3	45.4	43.7	69.8	67.7	68.1	75.3
November.....	47.6	47.6	46.2	44.8	70.9	67.6	68.2	76.6
December.....	48.8	49.0	48.5	44.4	71.1	67.8	68.6	76.0
January.....	46.4	46.9	45.5	42.8	70.8	68.0	68.2	75.6
February.....	46.1	46.5	45.6	42.2	70.6	67.8	67.7	75.2
March.....	45.2	47.2	45.4	44.1	70.4	67.5	67.6	72.2

(Continued)

Table 1.--Butter: Household purchases and average price per pound, U. S., 4-week periods (continued)

Period	Per buying family							
	Purchases				Quantity per purchase			
	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54	1956-57	1955-56	1954-55	1953-54
	Number	Number	Number	Number	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds	Pounds
April.....	2.66	2.64	2.74	2.71	1.11	1.09	1.09	1.06
May.....	2.63	2.60	2.80	2.75	1.10	1.10	1.10	1.04
June.....	2.51	2.60	2.72	2.64	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.04
July.....	2.47	2.45	2.65	2.58	1.10	1.09	1.09	1.04
August.....	2.52	2.50	2.81	2.67	1.10	1.08	1.08	1.03
September.....	2.62	2.58	2.86	2.69	1.09	1.09	1.09	1.03
October.....	2.62	2.68	2.84	2.59	1.10	1.10	1.09	1.02
November.....	2.61	2.66	2.88	2.65	1.11	1.11	1.09	1.04
December.....	2.71	2.70	2.66	2.68	1.12	1.13	1.11	1.05
January.....	2.70	2.65	2.73	2.90	1.11	1.10	1.09	1.04
February.....	2.66	2.70	2.65	2.73	1.11	1.10	1.10	1.04
March.....	2.68	2.68	2.67	2.75	1.11	1.11	1.09	1.04

Table 2.--Fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk: Total household purchases and average price paid per quart, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased			
	Fluid whole milk		Fluid skim milk	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts
April.....	1,086	1,046	68.2	54.7
May.....	1,093	1,064	67.3	53.6
June.....	1,064	1,034	65.9	55.7
July.....	1,067	1,003	65.4	55.3
August.....	1,083	1,021	64.0	59.2
September.....	1,131	1,082	63.4	61.7
October.....	1,163	1,112	64.9	58.7
November.....	1,170	1,117	63.7	55.0
December.....	1,164	1,119	66.6	53.0
January.....	1,173	1,125	66.9	54.6
February.....	1,176	1,121	71.2	58.7
March.....	1,180	1,116	70.5	61.6
	Average price paid per quart equivalent			
	Fluid whole milk		Fluid skim milk	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April.....	22.2	21.9	18.5	18.8
May.....	22.3	21.6	18.6	18.5
June.....	22.4	21.6	18.5	18.4
July.....	22.5	21.8	18.6	18.6
August.....	22.7	22.0	18.8	18.7
September.....	22.8	22.2	18.9	19.2
October.....	23.0	22.3	19.1	19.0
November.....	23.1	22.4	19.3	18.9
December.....	23.2	22.4	19.4	18.8
January.....	23.3	22.3	19.4	18.8
February.....	23.3	22.3	19.3	18.6
March.....	23.2	22.1	19.4	18.5

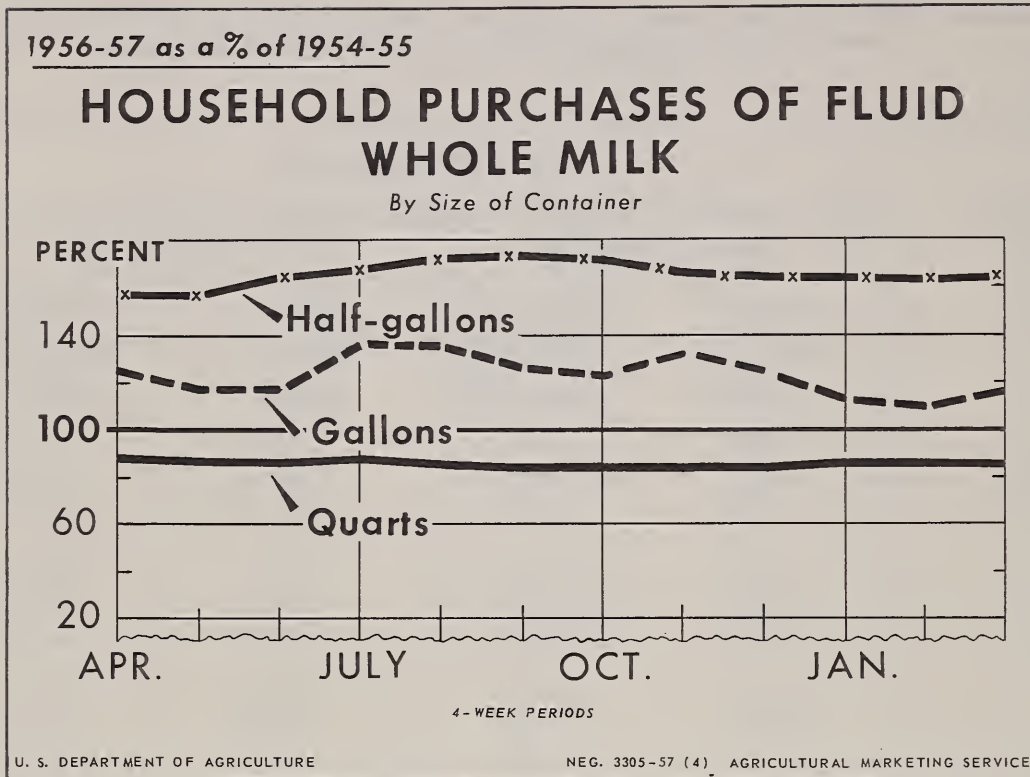


Figure 3

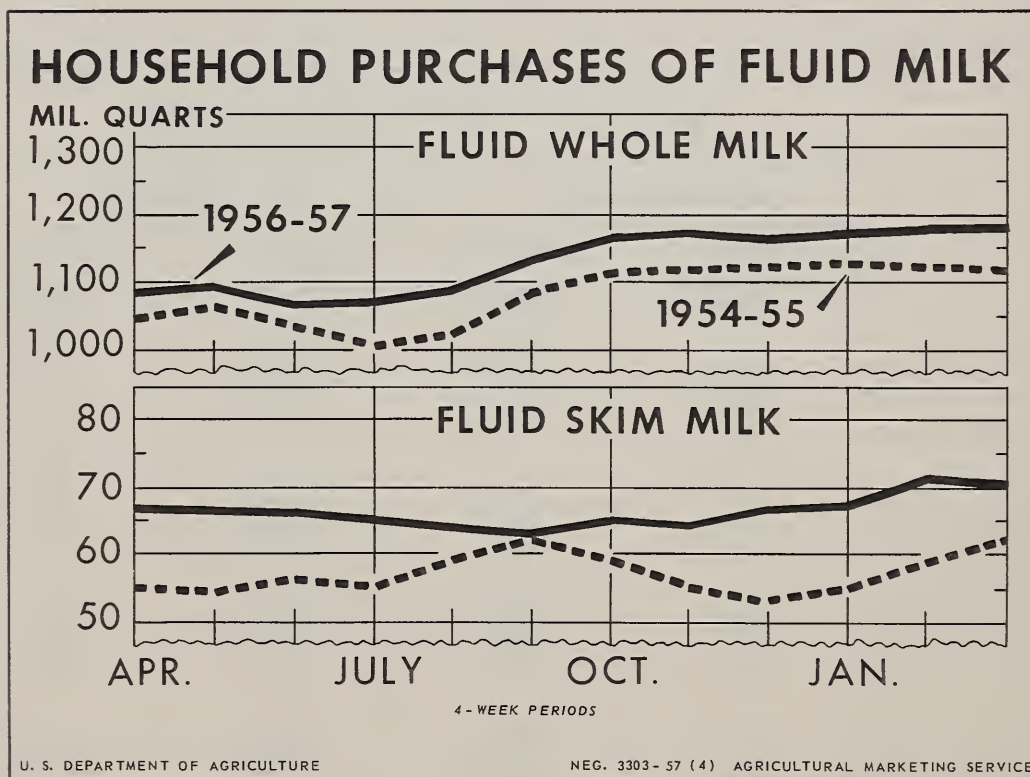


Figure 4

Table 3.--Fluid whole milk: Household purchases by container size and average price paid, per quart, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased							
	Quart		Half-gallon		Gallon		Other	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts
April.....	691	787	321	202	72.4	57.3	1.5	0.4
May.....	690	793	330	208	72.4	62.1	0.7	0.5
June.....	663	772	329	200	71.2	60.7	0.5	0.3
July.....	651	745	341	204	73.6	53.7	0.8	0.3
August.....	653	759	356	208	73.4	54.0	0.5	0.6
September.....	674	801	379	219	77.3	61.3	0.7	0.6
October.....	687	816	394	230	81.4	66.2	0.4	0.7
November.....	683	811	405	242	81.8	62.3	0.7	0.9
December.....	678	805	403	247	82.7	66.3	1.1	1.0
January.....	681	800	412	254	79.0	69.2	1.2	0.9
February.....	675	790	418	256	81.6	74.4	1.0	0.9
March.....	671	783	426	260	82.8	70.9	1.2	1.2
Average price paid per quart equivalent								
	Quart		Half-gallon		Gallon		Other	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April.....	23.2	22.7	20.9	20.4	18.1	17.5	1/	1/
May.....	23.3	22.4	21.2	19.9	18.5	17.0	1/	1/
June.....	23.3	22.5	21.3	19.5	18.2	16.6	1/	1/
July.....	23.5	22.7	21.3	19.7	18.3	16.8	1/	1/
August.....	23.7	22.8	21.6	20.1	18.5	17.2	1/	1/
September.....	23.9	23.1	21.7	20.4	18.6	17.2	1/	1/
October.....	24.2	23.2	21.9	20.6	18.5	17.6	1/	1/
November.....	24.4	23.2	22.0	20.7	18.5	17.8	1/	1/
December.....	24.5	23.3	22.1	20.5	18.6	18.2	1/	1/
January.....	24.5	23.2	22.2	20.5	19.0	17.9	1/	1/
February.....	24.5	23.3	22.1	20.5	18.8	17.9	1/	1/
March.....	24.5	23.1	22.0	20.3	18.6	17.7	1/	1/

1/ Not available.

Table 4.--Fluid skim milk: Household purchases by container size and average price paid, per quart, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Quantity purchased							
	Quart		Half-gallon		Gallon		Other	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts	Million quarts
April.....	53.4	47.9	11.9	4.0	2.7	2.7	0.2	0.1
May.....	51.9	47.2	13.0	3.8	2.3	2.4	.1	.2
June.....	50.7	48.7	12.7	5.4	2.4	1.5	.1	.1
July.....	50.2	48.5	12.9	4.4	2.2	2.3	.1	.1
August.....	49.9	50.6	11.9	5.5	2.1	3.0	.1	.1
September.....	48.3	53.3	13.5	5.4	1.6	2.8	<u>2/</u>	.2
October.....	49.2	51.4	13.6	4.8	2.1	2.2	<u>2/</u>	.3
November.....	48.8	48.9	13.4	4.4	1.5	1.7	<u>2/</u>	.1
December.....	50.4	46.4	14.0	4.7	2.1	1.7	.1	.2
January.....	49.8	46.0	15.2	6.5	1.8	2.0	.1	.1
February.....	53.9	50.2	15.0	6.4	2.3	1.9	<u>2/</u>	.2
March.....	55.1	52.4	13.5	7.3	1.8	1.7	.1	.2
Average price paid per quart equivalent								
	Quart		Half-gallon		Gallon		Other	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents	Cents
April.....	19.2	19.4	16.5	15.7	11.3	11.9	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
May.....	19.3	19.0	16.6	15.7	11.6	10.3	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
June.....	19.3	18.9	16.5	15.7	10.5	10.4	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
July.....	19.5	19.3	16.1	16.1	11.1	9.2	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
August.....	19.5	19.4	16.8	16.6	12.1	9.5	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
September.....	19.9	20.1	16.5	15.4	10.2	9.4	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
October.....	20.0	19.5	17.0	17.2	11.0	12.4	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
November.....	20.0	19.4	17.3	15.8	12.9	10.7	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
December.....	20.1	19.2	17.8	17.1	13.4	10.8	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
January.....	20.0	19.3	17.9	16.7	12.9	12.6	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
February.....	20.0	19.1	17.9	16.6	12.5	10.5	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>
March.....	20.1	19.1	17.7	15.9	11.4	12.5	<u>1/</u>	<u>1/</u>

1/ Not available.

2/ Less than .1.

Table 5.--Fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk: Percentage of families buying, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Any fluid milk		Fluid whole milk		Fluid skim milk	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
April.....	81.8	82.6	79.8	81.0	19.4	18.7
May.....	82.8	80.9	80.9	79.5	19.2	18.0
June.....	82.0	81.6	80.4	80.1	20.0	19.4
July.....	83.5	81.1	82.0	79.8	20.5	19.3
August.....	83.6	81.9	82.6	80.5	20.7	19.8
September.....	83.2	81.4	82.4	80.0	19.6	19.2
October.....	83.6	82.9	82.2	81.4	18.6	17.9
November.....	83.9	82.7	83.1	81.3	18.8	18.2
December.....	84.3	82.6	82.6	81.1	19.0	16.7
January.....	84.0	81.8	81.6	80.2	19.5	18.9
February.....	83.3	83.2	81.6	82.0	20.4	18.7
March.....	84.6	81.9	83.0	80.3	19.8	19.6

Table 6.--Fluid whole milk and fluid skim milk: Household purchases per capita in quart equivalent, U. S., 4-week periods

Period	Total		Fluid whole milk		Fluid skim milk	
	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55	1956-57	1954-55
	Quarts	Quarts	Quarts	Quarts	Quarts	Quarts
April.....	7.11	6.97	6.69	6.62	0.42	0.35
May.....	7.15	7.07	6.74	6.74	.41	0.34
June.....	6.96	6.90	6.55	6.54	.41	0.35
July.....	7.01	6.65	6.60	6.31	.41	0.35
August.....	7.10	6.79	6.70	6.42	.40	0.37
September.....	7.39	7.19	7.00	6.80	.39	0.39
October.....	7.53	7.31	7.13	6.94	.40	0.37
November.....	7.56	7.31	7.17	6.97	.39	0.34
December.....	7.55	7.31	7.14	6.98	.41	0.33
January.....	7.55	7.35	7.14	7.01	.41	0.34
February.....	7.59	7.36	7.16	6.99	.43	0.37
March.....	7.61	7.34	7.18	6.96	.43	0.38

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